

Application Serial No. 09/938,072
Amendment dated May 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated February 2, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the rejection of the claims based on a combination of U.K. 1,383,201, Miyazaki '979, Jogodzinski '317 and Van Zee '433, Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of canceled Claims 4 and 6. Specifically, the IR radiators are now defined as comprising an IR radiation cavity having reflective and/or backscattering boundary surfaces. For the reasons set forth below, it is submitted that the claimed structure would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art over the cited references, whether considered singly or in combination.

None of the references applied by the Examiner discloses providing an IR radiation cavity defining a bordered space having reflective or backscattering boundary surfaces and a combination of this limitation with the other limitations of Claim 1 would certainly not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. As described on page 4 of the specification, the provision of a radiation cavity having reflective and/or backscattering surfaces results in the infrared radiation being reflected back and forth several times at different angles. Each time that the IR radiation passes through the glass, it will heat only a very small portion of the glass. This is because the glass absorbs a small amount of the short wavelength radiation. The repetitive passes of the IR radiation through the glass leads to an overall heating of the glass in a very smooth manner. A further advantage to the IR radiation cavity is that it ensures high energy utilization, as described in the fourth full paragraph on page 4 of the specification.

It is submitted that Claim 1 has now been amended to have a scope that defines applicants' invention in a manner that avoids the prior art, even if combined. It is requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of the claims and pass the application to issue.

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The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 260-460-1692 if such would be of assistance in expediting prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

John F. Hoffman
Registration No. 26,280

Attorney for Applicants

JFH/nw

BAKER & DANIELS
111 East Wayne Street, Suite 800
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
Telephone: 260-424-8000
Facsimile: 260-460-1700

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: May 3, 2004

JOHN F. HOFFMAN, REG. NO. 26,280

Name of Registered Representative

Signature

May 3, 2004

Date